

282 COMMENTARY ON MACAULAY'S
HISTORY

Pen cannot describe worse of him than he
deserved/ After
the Revolution Sunderland was asked ' how it
was possible
for a person of his great parts and experience
for to have
given his master, King James, such pernicious
counsels,
and the executing of which brought on the
King all his mis-
fortunes. . . . He replied with a sneer, that but
for those
counsels the Prince of Orange had never
landed and suc-
ceeded/ '1

Unluckily the King's trusting nature led
him to repose
all his confidence in this knave instead of
playing off one
minister against another as Charles II had
done. ' The
King had a good judgement, but was diffident
of it, which
made him to resort to a minister's advice (I
wish it had been
in the plural) and the King his brother knew
his humour
but too well, and told me once that he [Charles
II] would
follow his brother of France's politics, to make
use of more
than one as he [Louis XIV] did by Colbert and
Louvois,
who were like fire and water ; adding, " Gods
fish! when
rogues fall out, the master is like then to know
the truth/' '2

I nail these remarks about Petre and
Sunderland, Ailes-
bury followed the Jacobite tradition.
Macaulay accepts it
as far as Petre was concerned. ' He was weak
and vain,
covetous and ambitious. Of all the evil
counsellors who had
access to the royal ear, he bore, perhaps, the
largest part in

the ruin of the House of Stuart/ ³ But he
 rejects the Jacob-
 ite theory about Sunderland. ' This idle story
 has been
 repeated down to our own day by ignorant
 writers. ... His
 conduct is to be ascribed to the alternate
 influence of cupid-
 ity and fear on a mind highly susceptible of
 both those
 passions, and quicksighted rather than
 farsighted/ ⁴

¹ Ailesbury, i. 102-3, 131-2, 127-8, 218.

- Ibid. p. 104. »II, 718 (vi).

⁴II, 721 (vi), 1086, 1094 (be), 2387-8 (xx).